

# Return to Flight: STS-114 continues the dream

By Joanne Hale

**T**HE STS-114 CREW is in place for the Space Shuttle's Return to Flight mission.

Three Mission Specialists have been added to the four astronauts already in training for the STS-114 mission planned for launch no earlier than September 2004. The new crewmembers are Andrew Thomas (Ph.D.), Wendy Lawrence (Capt., USN) and Charles Camarda (Ph.D.). They will join mission Commander Eileen Collins (Col., USAF), Pilot James Kelly (Lt. Col., USAF) and Mission Specialists Stephen Robinson (Ph.D) and Soichi Noguchi, of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, who were named to this flight in 2001.

"STS-114 is going to be a complex developmental test flight, and this crew has the right set of skills and experience to help get the Space Shuttles safely flying again," said NASA's Associate Administrator for Space Flight, William Readdy. "STS-114 was always slated to have a crew of seven. But now, instead of three crew rotating on-and-off the International Space Station, all crewmembers will be dedicated to the STS-114 mission objectives."

The major mission objectives of the STS-114 flight have shifted from Space Station logistics and crew rotation to testing and evaluating new procedures for flight safety. This includes Shuttle inspection and repair techniques. It also includes a smaller set of Space Station tasks from what was scheduled before the Shuttle *Columbia* accident in February.

"This is a demanding mission; and the addition of Andy, Wendy and Charlie to this already well-qualified crew ensures they have all the skills necessary to meet the challenge of Return to Flight and the resumption of Space Shuttle support of the International Space Station," said Bob Cabana, Director of Flight Crew Operations at NASA's Johnson Space Center.

At right, the STS-114 crew shares their feelings about being selected to be the first crew to return to flight following the *Columbia* tragedy.

**For more information about the STS-114 mission and crew, please visit**

<http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/shuttle/archives/sts-114/index.html>.



**Eileen Collins**

*I believe NASA's mission goes past STS-114 to the future of the Space Station and planetary exploration. The return to flight is more of a beginning versus an end. The 114 flight will be a milestone. It will be a beginning to our future.*



**Jim Kelly**

*I take pride in the fact that there are so many people on the ground that are dedicated to the job and are able to get us up into space. My pride centers far more around the team than it does around me individually, with the team being my crewmates, my office staff, flight crew operations and the whole NASA family.*



**Wendy Lawrence**

*I feel very honored to be added to the crew. Whoever is flying on the next flight knows it is to honor the Columbia crew because their desire was to continue what they believed in. I am honored to be in a position to do that.*



**Steve Robinson**

*I have got 27 years on the books at NASA, and every single one of those I have felt that this was a truly great organization to work for because of its people. It is those very same people that give me great pride to be part of the team that brings the Shuttle back into space.*



**Charlie Camarda**

*It is a sobering thought to be following in their footsteps. Three crewmembers were my classmates and all were my friends. Accidents can happen – spaceflight is risky. We need to do whatever we can to minimize the risk. Hopefully, we learned a lot from this tragedy, and we can improve NASA and how we do business. I see this as an opportunity to affect a change at NASA – a return back to focus on research and engineering.*



**Andy Thomas**

*I think it is very important to demonstrate a success. The Agency is still able to support the national goals of human spaceflight and continues to be the Agency that keeps the presence of the U.S. in space.*



**Soichi Noguchi**

*Of course in Columbia I had three crewmembers from my training class – the class of 1996. We will try to bring the Shuttle back in good condition and continue their dream of flying in space. Once I get back after the mission, I am sure I will feel that we brought back the seven souls with us on Atlantis.*